

REMARKS

This Response is submitted in reply to the non-final Office Action dated February 9, 2007. Claims 19-20 and 29-40 are pending in the present application. With this Response, claims 19, 29, 36 and 40 have been amended, and claims 61-63 have been added. No new matter has been introduced by any of the amendments or claims proposed in the Response. Thus, favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 36-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter. In particular, the Examiner alleges that claims 36-40 are directed to abstract ideas because the claims are seen as code per-se. The Applicants respectfully disagree, at least in part. Claim 36 primarily recites structure, not steps. Support for the recited structure in claim 36 can be found at least in Fig. 1. Additionally, dependent claim 40 has been clarified to point out that the apparatus includes a memory device that is encoded with or stores *executable instructions that when executed by one or more processors cause the electronic ticket assignment apparatus to perform at least one reading/writing operation of electronic ticket information from and into an information storage chip*. Thus, the memory device encoded with executable instructions is part of the apparatus, not the apparatus itself. Thus, the Applicants respectfully request that the §101 rejections be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 19-20 and 29-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Laval et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,173,209, hereafter "Laval"). The Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

With regard to independent claims 19 and 29, the claims have been amended to more particularly point out that the electronic ticket distribution store and method of the present invention allows for multiple tickets for the same event to be issued to and stored on a single storage chip. (see Applicants' Application, page 34, lines 20-23). With regard to independent claim 36, no claim amendments have been made. Claim 36, as previously presented, is directed to an electronic ticket assignment apparatus that allows any number of tickets purchased and stored on a storage chip to be assigned or reassigned to other storage chips. (see Applicants' Application, Figs. 40-41).

Conversely, Laval is directed to the electronic management of admissions to attractions at, for example, an amusement park, which includes the use of an electronic pass or card. As

described in Laval, a customer is provided with a choice of standing in line for an attraction or having a spot reserved for admission later without standing in line. (see Laval, col. 3, lines 44-48). The customer uses the electronic pass or card to establish entitlement to access the attraction. Although Laval discloses the use of an electronic pass or card for the purchase of services, the reference also specifically discloses that a user of the card is prevented from acquiring multiple reservations (i.e., passes) for the same attraction (i.e., a particular event). (see Laval, col. 3, lines 51-54). Moreover, nothing in Laval discloses the assignment of purchased reservations between two cards.

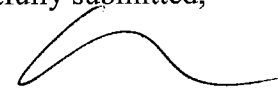
Conversely, in the present invention, the user of the information storage chip can purchase one seat (i.e., pass), or a block of seats (i.e., passes) for a specific event. When purchasing a block of seats, a consecutive number of seats can be automatically allocated; and the purchased seats can be easily stored, searched, added, deleted or even assigned to another user having a similar information storage chip. (see Applicants' Application, page 34, lines 20-23 and Figs. 40-41).

Accordingly, claims 19 and 29 (as amended) and claim 36 (as previously presented) are clearly distinguishable over Laval. Likewise, dependent claims 20, 30-35, 37-40 and 61-63 are also clearly distinguishable over Laval based on their respective dependencies on claims 19, 29 and 36.

In light of the above, the Applicants submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If any additional fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Director is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818.

Respectfully submitted,

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